

## Abstract

This invention relates to a process for preparing a low-odor  
5 hydrogel-forming acrylic acid polymer, which comprises the steps  
of: a) preparing a polymeric hydrogel by free-radically  
polymerizing a monomer composition comprising at least 50% by  
weight of acrylic acid in an aqueous polymerization medium and  
converting said hydrogel into a particulate hydrogel or into  
10 hydrogel-forming powder; and optionally b) treating said  
particulate hydrogel or said hydrogel-forming powder with a  
crosslinking substance which, actually or latently, contain at  
least two functional groups capable of reacting with the carboxyl  
groups on the addition polymer; characterized by the acrylic acid  
15 used in step a) containing less than 400 ppm of acetic acid and  
propionic acid. It further relates to the hydrogel-forming  
addition polymers obtainable by the process and to their use.

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